

§ 127.11 of this part, at which time merchandise having thus remained in Customs custody is considered as unclaimed and abandoned, the port director, with the concurrence of the Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, may, in lieu of sale of the merchandise as provided in subpart C of this part, provide notice to all known interested parties under paragraph (b) of this section that the title to such merchandise will be considered as vesting in the United States, free and clear of any liens or encumbrances, as of the 30th day after the date of the notice unless, before the 30th day, the merchandise is entered or withdrawn for consumption and all duties, taxes, fees, transfer and storage charges, and any other expenses that may have accrued on the merchandise are paid.

(b) *Notice to known interested parties.* Notice that the title to unclaimed and abandoned merchandise will vest in the United States, as described in paragraph (a) of this section, will be sent to the following parties on Customs Form (CF) 5251, appropriately modified, or other similar Customs document as designated by the port director or an electronic equivalent as authorized by Customs:

- (1) Importer, if known;
- (2) Consignee, if name and address can be ascertained;
- (3) Shipper, or the shipper's representative or agent, if merchandise is consigned to order or the consignee cannot be ascertained; and
- (4) Any other known interested parties.

(c) *Appraisal of merchandise.* Before title to unclaimed and abandoned merchandise is vested in the United States, the merchandise will be appraised in accordance with section 402, Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1401a).

§ 127.42 Disposition of merchandise owned by Government.

(a) *Disposition.* If title to any unclaimed and abandoned merchandise vests in the United States under § 127.41, the merchandise may be retained by Customs for its official use, or in Customs discretion, the merchandise may be transferred to any other

Federal, state or local agency, destroyed or disposed of otherwise.

(b) *Payment of charges and expenses.* All transfer and storage charges or expenses accruing on retained or transferred merchandise will be paid by the receiving agency. Such transfer and storage charges or expenses will include those accruing with respect to the merchandise while subject to general order.

§ 127.43 Petition of party for surplus proceeds had merchandise been sold.

(a) *Filing of petition.* Under section 491(d), Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1491(d)), any party who can satisfactorily establish title to or a substantial interest in unclaimed and abandoned merchandise, the title to which has vested in the United States, may file a petition for the amount that would have been payable to the party had the merchandise been sold and a proper claim made under section 493, Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1493).

(b) *When and with whom filed.* The petition may be filed with the port director at whose direction the title to the merchandise was vested in the United States. If the party received notice under § 127.41(b), the petition must be filed within 30 calendar days after the day on which title vested in the United States. If the party can satisfactorily establish that such notice was not received, the party must file the petition within 30 calendar days of learning of the vesting but not later than 90 calendar days from the vesting.

(c) *Evidence required.* The petition must show the party's title to or interest in the merchandise, and be supported, as appropriate, with the original bill of lading, bill of sale, contract, mortgage, or other satisfactory documentary evidence, or a certified copy of the foregoing. Also, if applicable, the petition must be supported by satisfactory proof that the petitioner did not receive notice that title to the merchandise would vest in the United States and was in such circumstances as prevented the receipt of notice.

(d) *Payment of claim.* If the claim of the owner, consignee, or other party having title to or a substantial interest

in the merchandise, is properly established as provided in this section, the party may be paid out of the Treasury of the United States the amount that it is believed the party would have received under 19 U.S.C. 1493 had the merchandise been sold and a proper claim for the surplus of the proceeds of sale been made under that provision (see § 127.36 of this part). In determining the amount that may have been payable under 19 U.S.C. 1493, given that the merchandise was not in fact sold at public auction under 19 U.S.C. 1491(a), the appraisal of the merchandise, as provided in § 127.41(c), will be taken into consideration. By virtue of the authority delegated to the port director in this matter, any payment made as provided under this paragraph in connection with the filing of a petition under paragraph (b) of this section will be final and conclusive on all parties.

(e) *Doubtful claim.* Any doubtful claim for payment along with all pertinent documents and information available to the port director will be forwarded to the Assistant Commissioner, Office of Finance, for instructions. The decision of the Assistant Commissioner, Office of Finance, with respect to any petition filed under this section will be final and conclusive on all parties.

PART 128—EXPRESS CONSIGNMENTS

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AUTHORITY: 19 U.S.C. 58c, 66, 1202 (General Note 3(i), Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the

United States), 1321, 1484, 1498, 1551, 1555, 1556, 1565, 1624.

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§ 128.0 Scope.

This part sets forth requirements and procedures for the clearance of imported merchandise carried by express consignment operators and carriers, including couriers, under special procedures.

Subpart A—General

§ 128.1 Definitions.

For the purpose of this part the following definitions shall apply:

(a) *Express consignment operator or carrier.* An “express consignment operator or carrier” is an entity operating in any mode or intermodally moving cargo by special express commercial service under closely integrated administrative control. Its services are offered to the public under advertised, reliable timely delivery on a door-to-door basis. An express consignment operator assumes liability to Customs for the articles in the same manner as if it is the sole carrier.

(b) *Cargo.* “Cargo” means any and all shipments imported into the Customs territory of the United States by an express consignment operator or carrier whether manifested, accompanied, or unaccompanied.

(c) *Courier shipment.* A “courier shipment” is an accompanied express consignment shipment.

(d) *Hub.* A “hub” is a separate, unique, single purpose facility normally operating outside of Customs operating hours approved by the port director for entry filing, examination, and release of express consignment shipments.

(e) *Express consignment carrier facility.* An “express consignment carrier facility” is a separate or shared specialized facility approved by the port director solely for the examination and release of express consignment shipments.

(f) *Closely integrated administrative control.* The term “closely integrated administrative control” means operations must be sufficiently integrated at both ends of the service (i.e., pick-up and delivery) so that the express consignment company can exercise a high